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Documents Relating to :

GURU GOBIND SINGH'S SWORDS
AND
SACRED BOOKS OF THE SIKHS
IN ENGLAND

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Compiled by
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With a Prefatory note by
SARDAR SURJIT SINGH MAJITHIA
Deputy Minister for Defence, Government of India
(1952-1962)

President, Chief Khalsa Dewan, Amritsar

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PREFATORY NOTE

By

Sardar Surjit Singh Majithia, Majitha House, Amritsar

I

The first set of documents in the brochure relates to the two swords of Guru Gobind Singhji Maharaj, taken to England during the fifties of the last century. One of these used to be kept in the Toshekhana of the Sikh Kingdom of Lahore. In March 1849, or ten years after the death of the creator of this kingdom, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, its vast territories were annexed by the British East India Company to its possessions in India. All the articles in the Toshekhana of the kingdom were also confiscated by the victors.

A set of eight pieces of arms and one (Kulghe-kuch) —(a crest of glass in a silver case), belonging to Guru Gobind Singh were found in the Toshekhana.

In the opinion of the then Governor General, Lord Dalhousie, "It should be impolitic to allow any Sikh institution to obtain possession of the set of arms, which Sikh traditions assert to have belonged to Guru Gobind Singh."

On the report of the Governor General regarding these weapons, and the Kulghi, the 13 gentlemen members of the Council of the Secretary of State in England in a despatch dated 16th April 1851, wished, "that the sword as having belonged to the founder of the Sikh nation, we are desirous of placing in our museum as an historical relic." In compliance with this order the sword was sent to England in January 1853.

The other sword is called by the name of the Raekote sword. It was preserved as a treasured heirloom in the Muslim Rajpoot family of Rai Kalha, by name, for some generations. The sword was given as a gift by Guru Gobind Singhji to Rai Shahbaz Khan and his brother Rai Fateh Khan in the year 1705 A.D. In April 1854, Rae Imam Bakhsh, and Rae Ahmad Khan, the descendants of Rai Shahbaz Khan, expressed their wish to the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana district that : "It would be gratifying to him, (Rae Imam Bakhsh), if the sword were forwarded to England and deposited in honour with the other historical relics of the Sikh Empire." On further investigation by the Deputy Commissioner, it transpired that the Rai family members desired, that the sword should be presented to Her Majesty the Queen of England. The Chief Commissioner, "considers, the gift to be not unworthy of its high destination."

Mr. R.C. Temple, secretary to the Chief Commissioner in his letter dated, 18th Sept. 1854, observed as follows :—

"If Nanak was the first religious teacher, Govind was the first political teacher of the Sikh sect. He established a "Theocratic polity, and founded the famous Khalsa . . . one of the strongest and most vigorous sects that ever arose in India." The sword of such a man, the Chief Commissioner thinks, is doubtless a relic of much historical interest."

The sword was taken to England in January 1855 and presented to Her Majesty, Queen Victoria.

The history of the sword and other details are given in the documents and need no further elucidation. The documents reproduced are true copies of the originals, from the files lying in the National Archives of India, New Delhi. The present location of the sword can be easily traced with the help of these documents.

II

The second set of documents relates to the authentic transcript copies of Adi Granth Sahib and the Dasam Padshah Ka Granth, the holy books of the Sikhs.

The Adi Granth Sahib was compiled by the fifth Guru Shri Guru Arjan Devji. It was completed and canonized by the Guru as a holy book of the Nanakpanthies, being worthy of worship, reverence and respect. It was installed as a holy book in the "All sides open," and "All people open," Golden Temple Amritsar by Guru Arjan Devji on 15th September 1604 or Bhadon Sudi Ekam 1661 Samwat Bikrami. The oldest Sikh Divine living at that time Baba Budhaji was appointed its Chief reader (Grunthi) by the Guru himself.

On the 12th June 1606 A.D. Guru Arjan Devji cast off his physical frame at Lahore, after undergoing tortures according to the Mongol code of punishment, by the orders of the Mughal Emperor Jahangir. The code did not allow the spilling of blood out of the bodies of holy men at the time of their execution. Hence other methods such as beating to death with hammers, breaking victim's bones with clubs, drowning in a river or a stream or boiling a person in a big cauldron full of water were employed to destroy holy men. The Guru had before his martyrdom excluded his son Dhirmal from the line of succession to apostleship. In the meantime, Dhirmal had taken possession of the holy book. He did not hand over the original compilation to the 6th Guru, Hargobind Sahib, the lawful heir to apostleship.

Repeated requests for its return by the successive Gurus in the genuine apostleship line, were turned down by Dhirmal and his descendants. It has remained and still is in the possession of the family, living at village Kartarpur in the Jullundur district of the Punjab. It is called as Kartarpur

Sahib wali Bir. In 1965, this holy scripture had been repaired under the supervision and directions of Shri V. S. Suri, M.A., P.E.S., Director and Curator, Punjab State Archives, Baradari Gardens, Patiala.

From the documents given in the brochure, it is revealed, that this Shri Adi Granth Sahib with its golden stand was found in the Toshekhana of the Lahore Darbar by the British in March 1849.

It was nearly after 11 months or in July 1850, that one Nihal Singh—a Motmid of Sodhi Sadhu Singh—the owner of this holy book applied for its return to its original owner.

Finally the Board of administration of the Punjab sanctioned its restoration and the Adi Granth Sahib was restored to Sodhi Sadhu Singh on certain conditions in June 1850. Another copy of the holy book in the Toshekhana known as Baba Granth, a copy of the original compilation made by Bhai Bannoo during the life-time of Guru Arjan Devji, was also returned to Bhaes Ram Singh and Nidhan Singh of village Mangat in June 1850.

The transcript copy in Her Majesty's library is the only copy so far made from this original Adi Granth Sahib after the death of Shri Guru Arjan Devji or during the last three hundred sixtyone years. The copy was got prepared by Sodhee Sadhu Singh and presented to the then Her Majesty, The Queen Victoria. The other transcript copy sent along with this was the Dasam Padshah ka Granth, got scribed and presented by the same Sodhi. These copies were sent to England in June 1859.

Both these holy books are not only valuable, but are held in very high esteem by the Sikhs.

I would venture to remark, that the Sikhs shall feel greatly obliged to Her Majesty—Queen Elizabeth II, if the

sacred sword and the transcript copies of their holy books in her possession are returned to them. This will be an act of graciousness on Her Majesty's part for which the sikhs will be ever grateful. In India these can be entrusted to the custody of a small committee of responsible Sikh gentlemen, or to some Sikh institution, with conditions as to their safety and proper preservation. Similarly the sword, preserved in the India House Museum in London, may also be got back by the present Government of India, and returned to the Sikhs. This act would go a long way in obliging and winning them.

It is gratifying to note, that the executive committee of the Chief Khalsa Dewan has decided and resolved to make efforts for the restoration of both the sacred swords and other relics to the Sikhs.

I personally appreciate the efforts of Bhai Nahar Singh, M.A., in searching, and copying, these documents from the original files in the National Archives of India, New Delhi.

SURJIT SINGH MAJITHIA

President

Chief Khalsa Dewan
Amritsar.

2nd August, 1967.

COMPILER'S NOTE

The compiler claims little credit for collecting the documents contained in the brochure. He simply located and copied these from the original files preserved in 'The National Archives of India, Janpath, New Delhi. The authorities of the archives as well as the officials and other gentlemen working in this great temple of knowledge deserve hearty thanks, for their help.

The first set of documents was copied in April 1964, and the second one in March 1966.

The first edition of the documents relating to the weapons of Guru Gobind Singh taken to England was published in December 1964. Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee, Delhi State, Delhi, Giani Sunder Singh of Peshawar, 40/12 East Patel Nagar, New Delhi, Sardar Budh Singh Sahib of Budh Singh Kartar Singh, silk merchants, Gurudwara Street Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi, Sardar Dalip Singh, Managing-proprietor of Samundri Transport Company, Mukatsar, helped the compiler in having the pamphlet printed by making advance payment for 500, 200, one hundred and 200 copies respectively. The Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar, bought one hundred copies only, as according to the rules of the Committee, it could not spend more than fifty rupees on such publications. The Sikh Review, Lindsay Street, Calcutta, published whole of the pamphlet in one of its issues and the Sikh Courier, London, England, published important documents.

The Government of India through its High Commission in London bought 6 pieces of arms from Lady Lindsay,

the great grand niece of Lord Dalhousie, who had taken these to England at the time of his retirement in 1856. The Council of the Secretary of State in a despatch dated 16th April 1851, had requested the Marquis of Dalhousie 'to retain these articles as a memorial of the great events in which His Lordship bore so important a part.'

The weapons were flown to India on 1st January 1966 and received at the Palam Airport, New Delhi, by the late Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and nearly 2 lakh people. The weapons were brought in a procession to the Rikab Ganj Gurudwara, Delhi and entrusted to the care and custody of the Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee, Delhi State. Compiler's petty efforts in tracing and publishing the relevant documents were mentioned in All India Radio Broadcasts by Dr. Gopal Singh, M.P., on 1st January 1966 and later by Shri Amar Nath Vidyalkar, ex-Minister Punjab and an ex-M.P. During the month of January the weapons were shown to public in the Rikab Ganj Temple. It is estimated, that about 3 lakh people paid homage to the weapons and made offerings of nearly rupees, sixty thousand, which were taken by the Gurudwara Committee, Delhi.

In the month of February, the charge of custody and care of these articles was taken by the Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar. The Committee made an elaborate programme of showing these weapons to the general public in India. The articles were arranged and put on a motor vehicle and taken to different towns, cities, places and points in the country. It is fairly estimated, that the total offerings made by the Sikhs and others up to this time amount to 8 lakh rupees nearly.

During the last 19 months of the arrival of these six pieces of weapons in India, neither the Shiromani Gurudwara

Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar, nor any other representative institution of the Sikhs has made efforts to procure the two swords of Guru Gobind Singh and other relics of the Sikh nation in England. Besides the two sacred swords, the important historical relics of the Sikh nation preserved in England at present according to my researches are :—

1. The Golden Throne or Chair of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. *(East India House Museum, London)*
2. Koh i-Noor Diamond. The famous diamond of the world. *(The Jewels of the British Crown)*
3. The Sikh Armour. *(Tower of London)*
4. The Sikh guns. Captured in the wars of 1846 and 1848. *(Buckingham Palace, London)*
5. Transcript copies of the holy books of the Sikhs.
 - (a) Guru Grunth Sahib.
 - (b) Dasam Padshah ka Grunth,
 - (c) Janam Sakhi of Guru Nanak.

(which Bedi Bikram Singh presented to the British Government in 1860).

The location of two other relics belonging to Gooroo Gobind Singh (1) Neza, (2) Kulghee Kuch, has not been traced by the compiler as yet. It is just possible, that with the kind help and guidance of the authorities of the National Archives some clue may be found by going through the old stock-registers of the Toshekhana of the Governor Generals of India from 1850 to 1947. Labour, industry, and perseverance must bear fruit.

It is very fortunate that Sardar Surjit Singh Majithia in his capacity as President of the Chief Khalsa Dewan, Amritsar, has taken upon himself the duty and responsibility for making genuine efforts for the restoration of these

historical relics of the Sikhs to some responsible organisation of the Sikh community. He is eminently fitted for such a noble and great task. He has inherited Sikh-like virtues, spirit of self-sacrifice, and devotional zeal for service from his illustrious father—Late S.B. Sir Sunder Singh Majithia C.I.E. (1871-1941)—and late Sir Attar Singh of Bhadaur, K.C.S.I., on mother's side. His family traditions dating back, to the days of the Sikh Jathedars, who fought against Ahmad Shah Abadali and further passing through Raja Surat Singh Majithia—a State prisoner of the British, his training, temperament, education, social position, personal contacts and above all his sterling qualities of character, “never to tell a lie” or betray a cause will certainly help him in achieving the desired result. The noble goal can be attained with the help, assistance and cooperation of the educated and influential Sikh gentlemen all over the world.

The compiler feels greatly obliged to Sardar Majithia for his very kindly writing a prefatory note to this brochure. He also thanks the Vichar Committee and the Executive Committee of the Chief Khalsa Dewan, Amritsar, for making an advance payment of rupees four hundred as price of 1,500 copies of the brochure, enabling him to have it printed.

The compiler will be failing in his moral duty if he does not mention the names of his kind friends and helpers, who made his stay in Delhi possible after his retirement from service in April 1963, and continue his researches and efforts in collecting, printing and publishing the source-material of the history of the Sikh people.

The performance of this self-imposed job requires expenses and money at every step. Following the noble example of their father late Guru Partap Singhji, d-1961, Guru Jagjit Singhji the present head of the Kuka Sikh Community and his younger brother Maharaj Bir Singhji

voluntarily gave him a monthly scholarship to continue his work, without any obligations or conditions. The compiler is not a Namdhari or a Kuka Sikh. He is an old Singh Sabhaite of late Bhai Takhat Singh's order and stamp, and strict follower of the Rahat Maryada Code, as finally compiled by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar, in 1945.

In the printing and publication of the source-material, he has been regularly helped by the Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Delhi, especially by Bakhshi Gurcharan Singh, ex-President, Jathedar Santokh Singh, the Secretary, and Bhai Gurdial Singh, the Manager and other members. Sardar Surat Singh of Murtzapur, P.O. Pehowa, District Karnal paid total expenses of the books "Gooroo Ram Singh and the Kuka Sikhs" *Documents* from 1863 to 1872. Sardar Jaswant Singh, P. 594, Pruna Dass Road, Calcutta-29 published the documents relating to the swords of Guru Gobind Singhji in England, on his own expenses for free distribution.

The compiler is greatly indebted to Sardar Mehtab Singh, M.A., proprietor of the Hindustan Refrigeration Store, 2, Faiz Bazar, Darya Ganj, Delhi, for bearing a greater share of the typing charges of all the source-material collected by the compiler. Moreover he voluntarily offered monetary help many a time, thus enabling the compiler to continue his work. As one of the 19 members Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Delhi State, he suggested a scheme of getting photographs of all the sacred Gurdwaras of Guru Gobind Singhji at the time of the Great Guru's 300th auspicious birthday. The Committee very kindly sponsored a tour of the compiler from Lakhnaur Sahib in Ambala district to Anandpur Sahib and from Anandpur Sahib to Talwandi Sabo-Damdama Sahib in the Bathinda district.

The tour was undertaken in November 1966. The compiler and his companion photographer traversed the routes taken by Guru Gobind Singhji. Detailed local traditions as preserved from generation to generation were recorded and photographs of Gurdwaras, paintings, and sacred relics, numbering about 130 were taken and given over to the said Committee. It is however regretted that about 30 places on the route, sacred to the memory of the great Guru, could not be visited.

During this tour the compiler happened to see several fake weapons and articles alleged to have belonged to Guru Gobind Singhji Maharaj. He too found on investigation that some of the Hukamnamas in possession of private individuals were not genuine, but fabricated and spurious. The compiler would like to quote one glaring instance only out of so many. The sword kept in the Gurdwara Saropa Sahib in the palace of the Maharaja of Nabha is falsely alleged to be the Raekat sword, secured from the Ranee by the Maharaja of Nabha. The inscription on the sword "GENOA" in Roman characters reveals the falsehood. The story, narrated by custodian Granthi, and others as to how this sword was brought to Nabha by Maharaja Jaswant Singh is chronologically wrong and a bundle of fabricated lies. Maharaja Jaswant Singh died in 1842. His son Maharaja Devindar Singh of Nabha was made a state prisoner by the British in 1846. He was succeeded by Maharaja Bharpur Singh.

Maharaja Karam Singh of Patiala died in 1845 and his son Maharaja Narindar Singh who offered a large sum for the sword ruled the state from 1845 to 1862.

The Rani of Raekote, who refused all offers of money and even pressure from the Sikh Maharajas including Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Lahore lived up to April 1854.

Rae ILYAS, her husband had died in 1802, as a result of a cut sustained from this very sword. The Nabba story of the procurement of the sword from the Rani is absurd and wrong in the light of the documents contained in the brochure. It is requested that the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar, controlling the incomes and expenditure of the Gurdwaras should also make a deep probe in such important matters. The next generation is being brought up in an age of pure reason, science and technology, gifted with a sense of curiosity to know facts.

In this tour the compiler stayed at Talwandi Sabo or Damdama Sahib in the Bhatinda district for 3 days continuously. The results of his researches and investigations on the spot regarding the weapons of Guru Gobind Singhji Maharaj and other important matters relating to the sacred place require the immediate attention of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar and other wellwishers of the Panth.

The compiler thanks Sant Ram Bharpur Singh of Gurdwara Ajitgarh, P O. Masani, Railway Station Salemgarh Masani, district Ganga Nagar for his buying 500 copies of the Pamphlet—Guru Nanak—the lover of mankind for free distribution, published in September, 1965.

He gratefully acknowledges the debt of gratitude, under which he has been put by Sant Ishar Singhji of Rarewala, Gurdwara Karamsar district Ludhiana, for his very graciously bearing all expenses for the publication of the documents relating to Bhae Maharaj Singhji, a rebel against the British power in India. These documents have been copied from the original files preserved in the National Archives. After the annexation of the Lahore kingdom by the British in March 1849, Bhae Maharaj Singh organised

masses of the Punjab for an open rebellion. He was a disciple of Baba Bir Singh of Naurangabad in the Amritsar district, who was murdered by the recalcitrant and rebellious army of the Lahore Darbar in 1845.

Bhae Maharaj Singh was arrested by the British authorities on 28th December 1849 at Adampur Doaba in the Jullundur district. He was at once taken to Hong Kong as a state prisoner under Bengal Regulation III of 1818. He was confined in the central jail. He died in 1856 after undergoing great sufferings. Sant Ishar Singhji represents the Sikh Samparda at present. The Samparda was started by Bhai Dya Singhji Sahib, one of the 5 Piaras or beloved ones of Guru Gobind Singhji Maharaj. The cardinal principles of the Samparda are deep meditation, *Simran*, *Bhajan*, *Parchar*, *Kirt Karan*, running of a free kitchen or *langar* and *Sewa* or service of the common people, through beneficent activities and institutions.

Santji is running a *langar* or free food for all, a Higher Secondary School, a mechanized model agricultural farm at Karamsar and an experimental agricultural farm for the reclamation of wasteland at Dhablan. He has reclaimed the worst affected alkaline (*Shor Thur*) Land in the shortest possible period of time. He has administered Amrit or has baptised nearly 2 lakh people during the last 20 years.

The compiler once again thanks all those friends and helpers who are rendering him moral help and financial assistance in his arduous task. He thanks Shri Vidya Parkash Dhawan, the proprietor of R. K. Printers and workers of the press for their co-operation and help.

All enquiries and further details in respect of the contents of this brochure may be addressed to the compiler. Enquiries and questions will be promptly attended to and replied.

NAHAR SINGH, M.A.

14th July 1967.

- (1) V. Nangal Khurd
P.O. Pakhowal
Distt. Ludhiana.
- (2) 24/30 Shakti Nagar,
Delhi-7.

DOCUMENT I

Secretary of State's Despatch No. 16 of 16 April 1851.

Political Department No. 6 of 1851

Our Governor General of India in Council.

1. We now reply to your letter in the foreign department dated 25 March No. 8 of 1850 and to the Governor General's letter dated 19th Dec. No. 597, 1850.

2. The Governor General states that with reference to our despatches in the military department No. 6 of 1849 dated 1st May and No. 8 of 1849 dated 4th July he has selected from the arms and armour in the Lahore Toshekhanah four complete sets for transmission to England. He had selected for Her Majesty two best and most complete sets, adding portion of other sets which were remarkable for beauty or by some traditional history. Thus with other portion of the arms belonging to the great Maharaja, His Lordship has selected for Her Majesty the sword presented to Ranjeet Singh, by Holkar when that Chief met the "Maharaja at Umritsar on his retreat before Lord Lake's army."

3. On the arrival of these articles in England we shall take the necessary measures for delivering them to Her Majesty.

4.
... ..

5. There are several other articles on which our orders are requested viz.,
... ..

3rd. A set of arms including spear, etc. which Sikh traditions assert to have belonged to the Gooroo Gobind," and of

which it would in the Governor General's opinion be impolitic to allow any Sikh institution to obtain possession. The Governor General requested that if we are not desirous to place these arms in our museum, he may be permitted to purchase them from the Toshekhana, but we have much pleasure in requesting the Marquis of Dalhousie to retain these articles with the exception of the sword, as a memorial of the great events in which His Lordship bore so important a part. The sword as having belonged to the founder of the Sikh nation we are desirous of placing in our Museum as an historical relic."

We are your affectionate friends

London
16th April, 1851.

*Signature of 13 gentlemen members of the
Council of the Secretary of State*

DOCUMENT 2

**Translation of an Urzee from Rae Misr Meghraj Treasurer
dated the 12th September, 1851**

States in reply to a Parwanah addressed to him calling for information regarding the arms of Gooroo Govind Singh, that the under-mentioned parties presented the following arms to Maharajah Ranjeet Singh and others saying that Gooro Govind Singh used to wear them. The Maharaja sent them into the Toshekhana, and directed that they should be worshipped every day.

(1) **Shamsher wa Sipar** (*Sword and Shield*). These were presented on 30th Bysakh 1880 sumbut (1823 A.D.) by one Dya Singh of Peshawar to Maharajah Runjeet Singh, who gave him a well and a suit of clothes (on return).

(2) **Dae-i-Ahinee** (*an iron weapon*). A hillman brought this to the Maharajah 28 years ago.

(3) **NEZA** (*a lance*) was presented to Maharajah Runjeet Singh by the Singhs of Ubchnagar.

(4) **Chukkur-i-ahinee**, a circular missile *weapon* of iron.

An Akalee Singh presented this to M.R. Runjeet Singh at Utuk.

(5) **Shamsher Teghah** (*a scimitar*). Taken from one Baba Bhartee on 25 Mughur 1878 (or 1821 A.D.) and made over to the Toshekhana by Maharajah

(6) **Kulghee-i-Kuch** (*a crest of glass in a silver case*). A Sahibzada descendant of (Nanak) of Vyrowal brought this to M.R. Runjeet Singh on 7th Chet 1881. (1824 A.D.)

(7) **Burcha** (*a small spear*). This belonged to Kumlagarh Raja (Chief of Mundee) who used to worship it. General Ventura got it, when he took the fort of Kumalgarh and presented it to koer Naunihal Singh in the month of Magh 1896 or 12 years ago.

(8) **Burcha** (*a large spear*). The khalsa army got this at Jummoo when they invaded that place 8 years ago. The whole army used to worship it.

True copy

(Sd.) P. Melvill
Secretary

DOCUMENT 3

Fort William
Foreign Deptt.

Dated 5 Feb., 1853

To

The Honble the Court of Directors
Honble Sirs,

With reference to para 157 of our letter No. 46 dated the 7th August last, we have the honour to apprise your Honourable Court of the dispatch by the General Screw Steam Shipping Company's vessel **Bosphours** of the Golden Chair of Maharaja Runjeet Singh and the Sword of the Gooroo, for your museum.

2. There were two swords said to belong to the Gooroo. The Governor General has selected for your Honble Court the one which is not only the better in appearance, but which from the written representation of Misr Meg Raj accompanying the arms, appeared to have been most prized by Maharaja Runjeet Singh.

We have

(Sd.) *Governor General and Members of the Council.*

THE RAEKOTE SWORD

DOCUMENT 4

From

Henry Brereton, Esq.

Deputy Commissioner, Loodhiana

To

G.C. Barnes, Esq.

Commissioner & Superintendent,

Cis. Sutlej States, Kussowile

Dated Loodhiana, 1st May, 1854.

General

Sir,

In continuation of my letter No. 102 dated 7th last, I have the honour to inform you, that Rae Imam Buksh (sometimes called Mamoo Khan) upon receiving from me, the personal property of the late Ranee of Raekote, produced a sword, which has been a treasured Heirloom in the family for some generations. He expressed a wish, that the sword should be forwarded to the Governor-General (A). It may be interesting to have its history, which is as follows:—

(2) When Gooroo Govind escaped from his enemies at Makhawal he sought refuge and received protection from the Raekote Chief¹, in gratitude for this kindness he presented him his sword, which was all he possessed with the injunction that it should not be worn or carried except in battle or in some great emergency.²

(3) The sword was treasured with religious care, until the time of the late Rao³ who took it with him on occasion of a sporting excursion contrary to the earnest remonstrances of his followers. His horse happening to fall with him he drew the sword to cut the stirrup leather by which he was entangled. The struggles of the horse however were violent and the Rao received from the drawn weapon a wound on his thigh; the haemorrhage from which quickly caused his death.

(4) This sword has been greatly sought by various Sikh chiefs from Runjeet Singh⁴ to the present Maharajah of Puttealab⁵, who have at different times offered very large sums for its possession. All temptations have been however indignantly repelled by the late Ranee⁶ and the presentation of this treasured memento of the Great Sikh Gooroo by Rao Imam Bux is I think a graceful act on his part and deserves acknowledgement. It would be gratifying to him if the sword were forwarded to England, deposited in honour with the other historical relics of the Sikh Empire.

(5) I have translated the following inscription from Goormookhi which is engraved on the sides of the blade:—

“May God’s protection rest on me. There is one God, and a true Gooroo, whom I worship. This is the signature of the 10th Khalsa Ootar (*i.e.* Gooro Govind). This sword is the protection of all kinds of harms, the Omni-present God is with me always, God the protector of the lives of men.”

(6) I have deposited the sword in the Treasury; pending your directions,

I have.....

(Sd.) H. Brereton
Deputy Commissioner

Notes (A)

Excerpt from an application of Rai *Imam Bakhsh* and Rai Ahmadkhan to the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana in the Persian Language.

“Roze ke Janab mai Sahiba muzamma mukarmma rahlat farme shudaad wa Sahib Deputy Commissioner Bahadur zilah Ludhiana barai mazart wa tashafi ma beksan wa daryaft hal ronaq afroz kasba Raikat shudand. Ma fidwyan bakhyal khud fahmida shamsher-i-mutbarka Guru Gobind Singh ra keh bihtar azin.. ? *bebaha* nazar Shahan bakhanae khud nahdasthtand khidmate Deputy Commissioner bahadur barai Nazar Shahnshah Inglisia bahadur bazaria janab mustajab Governor General Sahib Bahadur guzaranidem.

(Punjab Government Records.

23 September, 1854—November 7—a)

(1) Rai Shahbaz Khan.

(2) “Parwardgar Tum ko salamt ba kramat Rakhe aur riyasat par mukim farmave. Aur Is Shamsher ko mutbarak samajh kar baja tor par apne pas rakhna.”

(Punjab Government Records 22-9-1854

(*Anarkali Tomb, Lahore*) No. 7—10

(3) Rai Ilyas Khan by name, who died in 1802 A.D.

(4) Maharaja Ranjit Singh wanted to get this sword. Mian Kadar Bakhsh—a trusted officer of the Raja of Kapurthala was sent for this purpose, but the Rani refused to part with the sword, for any amount of cash money or Jagir.

(5) Maharaja Narindar Singh Sahib Bahadur of Patiala, who ruled Patiala State from 1845 to 1862.

(6) Ranee Bhag Bharee, widow of Rae Ilyas Khan. She died in April 1854.

DOCUMENT 5

From

R. C. Temple, Esquire

Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab.

To

G.F. Edmonston, Esquire

Secretary to the Government of India.

(Political)

Dated Lahore, 18th September, 1854

Sir,

In reply to your letter No. 2690, of the 23rd of June, I am directed to forward for the information of the Most Noble the Governor General in Council, copies of letter No. 194 of the 12th Ultimo, from the Commissioner of Cis-Sutlej States, with its enclosures, supplying the further information required, regarding the presentation of the Sword of Gooroo Govind by the Raekote family.

2 It appears that the donors desire that the sword should be presented to Her Majesty, the Queen of England. The Chief Commissioner considers the gift to be not unworthy of its high destination. If Nanak was the first religious teacher, Govind was the first political teacher of the Sikh sect. He established a "Theocratic Polity", and founded the famous Khalsa. He gave his followers the name of Singh or Lion, and taught *them to resist their oppressors, by force of arms*. He imparted unity and energy to a secular system. His predecessors were preachers. He was emphatically the warrior Priest, and his memory is reverentially cherished by the remnant of what was once one of the strongest and most vigorous sects that ever rose in India,

The sword of such a man, the Chief Commissioner thinks, is doubtless a relic of much historical interest.

I have the honour to be

Sir

Your most obedient servant

(Sd.) R.C. Temple

Secretary

Lahore

18th September 1854.

DOCUMENT 6

From

R. C. Temple, Esq.,

Secretary to the Chief Commissioner for the Punjab.

To

G.F. Edmonstone, Esq.,

Secy. to the Government of India in the Foreign Deptt.,
Calcutta.

Lahore, the 28th November, 1854.

Political

Sir,

With reference to your letter No. 4461 of the 13th Ultimo, I am directed by the Chief Commissioner to report to you, for the information of the Most Noble the Governor General in Council, that the Sword of Gooroo Govind has this day been despatched to your address through the Lahore Post Office.

I have the honour to be

Sir,

Your most obedient servant

(Sd.) R.C. Temple

Secretary

DOCUMENT 7*Calcutta, the 19th December, 1854.*

Received in the Government Toshekhana a Box containing a Sword, which belonged to the late Gooroo and was received from the Commissioner of Punjab for despatch to the Honble The Court of Directors.

(Sd.) Illegible
Supdt.

DOCUMENT 8**From the Court of Directors****Political Department****Despatch No. 24 of 1855****Our Governor General of India in Council.**

28. Items 212 to 215—and letter dated 8th Jany No. 1855—a sword, which had belonged to Gooroo Govind has been presented to the Governor General by Rao Imam Buksh and Ahmed Buksh, relatives of the late Ranee of Raekote with the expression of a wish, that it might be transmitted to England and presented to Her Majesty. It has been received at Calcutta, and will be forwarded by an early opportunity.

ORDERS

On receiving this relic we shall take the proper steps for the delivery of it to Her Majesty.

Letter dated 8th Jany., 1855

Sword of Gooroo Govind Singh

London

3rd October, 1855.

Your affectionate friend

Signaturer of Directors.

SET II

Punjab Government Records :—Press Lists

Note : The following five documents were preserved in the prepartition days 1947, in the Punjab Government old record office, Anarkali Tomb, Lahore. These old records unfortunately have not been partitioned and are still supposed to be kept in the above mentioned Records Office at Lahore.

DOCUMENT NO. I

Serial No. 796

Dated 20th February, 1850

From

Bhai Nihal Singh, Mohtmid of Guru Sadhu Singh
(of Kartarpur)

To

Deputy Secretary to the Board of Administration,
Punjab.

*Sub :—Application of Bhai Nihal Singh for a Granth taken
away by Dr. Login*

Abstract

Petition from Bhai Nihal Singh representing that Dr. Login has taken away his Granth or Sacred Book and begging that it may be restored to him.

DOCUMENT NO. 2

No. 57

Dated 22nd February, 1850

From

Major H. P. Burn, Deputy Secretary to the Board
of Administration, Punjab.

To

Major MacGregor, C.B.
Deputy Commissioner, Incharge,
Durbar Establishment.

Abstract

The petition is forwarded to Major MacGregor, In-
charge of the Darbar Establishment, with a request that
the Granth may be given up to Sadhu Singh on his beco-
ing responsible for its safety.

DOCUMENT NO. 3

No. 106

Dated 11th April, 1850

From

Major G. H. MacGregor, C.B.
Deputy Commissioner, Lahore, Incharge of Citadel
Establishment

To

Major H.P. Burn, Deputy Secretary to the Board of
Administration, Punjab.

Subject:—Delivery of a copy of the Granth to Guru Sadhu Singh

Abstract

Major MacGregor, Deputy Commissioner, Lahore,
incharge of the Citadel Establishment, reports the terms on
which it is proposed to deliver over the Granth to Guru
Sadhu Singh. Solicits the Board's orders on the subjects.

DOCUMENT NO. 4*No. 137**Dated 22nd April, 1850.*

From

Major H. P. Burn,
Deputy Secretary to the Board of Administration,
Punjab

To

Major G.H. MacGregor,
Deputy Commissioner, Lahore

Abstract

The Deputy Secretary to the Board of Administration authorizes Major MacGregor to make over the Granth to Guru Sadhu Singh on his binding himself unconditionally be responsible for it. The security offered by Rajas Teja Singh and Dina Nath may be dispensed with as not being sufficiently adequate.

DOCUMENT NO. 5*No. 207**Dated 13th July, 1850.*

From

Major G. H. MacGregor,
Deputy Commissioner,
Incharge of Citadel Establishment.

To

Major H. P. Burn, Deputy Secretary to the Board of Administration, Punjab.

Subject — Restoration of the Adh Granth Sahib to the Original Owners.

Abstract

Major MacGregor, Deputy Commissioner Incharge of the Citadel Establishment, reports, that the Gurus to whom

the Adh Granth Sahib was given have applied for the restoration of the Golden Charpoy on which the Granth Sahib formerly rested and which is now in the Moti Mandir. Solicits the Board's instructions.

DOCUMENT NO. 6

Adi Granth

Foreign—1850—Political

6th Sept.—123

From

Major H. P. Burn, Deputy Secretary to the Board of Administration, Punjab.

To

Sir H M. Elliot, K. C. B.
Secy. to the Government of India with the Governor General.

Dated Lahore, 15 August, 1850

Political Despatch

Sir,

By order of C. I. Mansel & J. Lawrence Esq.

I am desired by the Board of Administration to report for the information of Government that on the application of Gooroo Sadhoo Singh, they have delivered and restored to him the Adh Grunth, he becoming responsible for its safe keeping.

2. This copy of the Grunth is held in much veneration by the Sikhs. being the original book handed down to them from Gooroo Urgan Nath, their fifth Gooroo.

3. It used latterly to be kept in the Durbar, and rested on the Golden stand. This stand was not given up with the book to Gooroo Sadhoo, and he now applied for it. Its value is estimated at Rs. 850/-.

4. The Board recommends its restoration, and with the sanction of Government, will direct it to be given to the Gooroo.

5. Another copy of this sacred Book, the Baba Grunth which also came down from the time of Gooroo Urjun, has been entrusted to the care of Bhaees Ram Singh and Needhan Singh of Mangat who were its custodians, during the time of the Darbar.

6. Its golden stand is also looked upon, by the Bhaees as belonging to the Book, and they pray for its restoration. Its value is the same as the stand of the Adh Grunth

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant

(Sd.) H. P. Burn

Deputy Secretary

15th August, 1850

DOCUMENT NO. 7

From

The Secretary to the Government of India
with the Governor General.

To

The Board of Administration for the Affairs
of the Punjab,

Foreign Department

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Deputy Secretary's letter dated the 15th instant No. 337. reporting the restoration to Gooroo Sadhoo Singh of the

Adh Grunth and to Bhaees Ram Singh and Nidhan Singh of the Baba Grunth, and recommending the restoration also of the Golden stand on which the book rested.

2. In reply, I am directed to inform you, that the Most Noble the Governor General has been pleased to comply with the recommendation of your Board.

I have...

(Sd.) H. M. Elliot

Simla

28th August, 1850

Secy. to the Govt. of India

with the Governor General.

Restoration of Adi Grunth

DOCUMENT 8

PUBLIC DEPARTMENT

No. 111 of 1857

12th August, 1857

Court of Directors' letter

Our Governor General of India in Council

1. It has been suggested to us through Professor Wilson, by Mr. N. Cust of the Bengal Civil Service, that it would be an object of great interest to obtain a perfectly correct copy of the Grunth or sacred Book of the Sikhs, and have a translation made of the Book into English or some other European language.

2. It is undoubtedly desirable that the Government of India becomes acquainted with the Book, which regulates the principles and opinions, both moral and religious, of so large a population, but the wishes and feelings of those professing the religion should be consulted before the gratification of this desire and the book, if permitted to be translated, be rendered into the English language.

3. We are desirous, therefore, that you should consider in what way the proposed objects may most effectively be carried out and report to us the opinion on the subject, which you may be led to form, after consultation with the officers who may be best qualified to give advice on the subject.

We Are
London Signatures of the Court of Directors.
The 12th August, 1857

DOCUMENT 9

No. 2354

Extract from the proceedings of the Right Honble the Governor General of India in Council in the Home Department under dated the 10th Nov., 1857.

Read a despatch No. 111 of 1857 dated the 12th instant from the Honble the Court of Directors forwarding for a proposal for the translation into English of the Grunth or sacred Book of the Sikhs.

Ordered that a copy of the above Despatch be forwarded to the Foreign Department whence the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab will be called upon to report on the proposal.

DOCUMENT 10

Fort William,
Foreign Department

13 November, 1857

To

The Chief Commissioner Punjab

Sir,

I am directed by G.G. in Council to transmit to you the enclosed copy of a despatch from the Court of Directors in the Public Department No. 111 dated 12th August regarding a proposal for the translation, into English, of the sacred book of the Sikhs, and to request, that you will report your opinion upon the proposal in question.

I have etc.,
(Sd.) (Secretary)

DOCUMENT 11

No. 142

From

D.F. Mcleod, Esquire

Financial Commissioner for the Punjab.

To

R.H. Davies Esquire

Secy, to Government Punjab and its dependencies.

Dated Lahore, the 21st February, 1859

Revenue General

Sir,

With a letter No 4568 dated 13th November 1857 from the Secretary to the Government of India, the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab received a copy of a despatch from

the Honble the Court of Directors, in the Public department No. 111, dated 12th August 1857, approving of a suggestion made to them by Mr N. Cust that a correct copy of the Grunth or sacred book of the Sikhs should be procured and a translation made of it into English or some other European language. This letter and enclosure were referred to me with a request, that after consulting with such of the most influential Sikhs, as I might think proper, I would indicate the course it might appear to me advisable to adopt.

2. I have the honour to return the above documents and to state, that I have now in my possession, an authentic copy of all the Grunths made over to me by Guru Sadhoo Singh Sodhee of Kurtarpur, Chief of the Sodhee priesthood, the representatives of Guru Govind. All the natives with whom I consulted, indicated him as the proper party to supply a copy, [as he possessed the original written or signed by the Gurus themselves—and could at once have faithfully transcribed and on my applying to him, he promised to have this done.

3. Accordingly in fulfilment of this promise he sent to me, sometime ago, conveyed in his own state bullock carriage or Rath, a copy of the "Adi Grunth", or precepts of the first 5 Gurus compiled by Guru Arjun, and a short time ago, the remaining volume, designated the Daswain Padshah ka Grunth or book of the 10th leader Guru Govind was made over by him to the Deputy Commissioner of Jullundhur, in whose district Kurtarpoor is situated from whence it has been recently forwarded to Lahore.

4. My request to the Guru was that he would have copies made by transcribers, whom Government would remunerate for the task, but although he, at the time, made no objection, he now altogether declines this, stating that he has presented them himself, out of respect and deference

to the British Government. He has also since informed me, that so great a privilege has been always attached by him to the possession of the only true originals that although Maharajah Ranjeet Singh had expressed a desire, to obtain a copy taken from them, he had refused to give one. It will, I think, be suitable if he receives from the proper quarters, a recognition of this act of compliance.

5. I would now suggest, that these **two volumes** which I have had fitted into suitable box, be sent to England for deposit in the oriental library belonging to Her Majesty, and it would be in my opinion most appropriate, that Sir John Lawrence should himself present them on their reaching England. By their being thus disposed of, not only will a valuable addition be made to the manuscripts of the above library, but the very best opportunity will be afforded to the oriental scholars of Europe, who may be so inclined to study the book and render it into English or other European tongue.

6. In India Gurumukhi language and character do not appear to have been taken up by any of our oriental scholars, with interest, and I know of no one here who possesses the requisite knowledge, inclination and leisure, for the task of making a translation. I would strongly recommend, therefore, as the preferable course, that the scholars of England and of continental countries, be invited to undertake the task on which they would bring to bear philosophical appliances and opportunities and an amount of oriental research and learning not to be looked for here.

7. If however it be desired, that the translation be undertaken in India, ordinary copies of the Grunth, and men to explain them are readily procurable, and it has been suggested that the easiest mode would be, to have it first

translated into English. Mr. Cust is quite prepared to have this plan put into execution if the requisite funds be placed at his disposal and as he has peculiar tastes and aptitude for such an undertaking, was himself the original proposer of the scheme, and is now located at Umritsar, the Headquarters of Sikhism, it could not be trusted to better hands.

8. Another mode, in which the same object might perhaps be attained, would be by an offer of a certain sum—say Rs. 1000/- for a good translation of the Grunth, when some of our officers or other individuals, who may have the taste and the leisure for oriental pursuits, would perhaps qualify themselves for the tasks, and compete for the honour and the reward thus held out.

I have etc.

(Sd.) C. Paske

Personal Assistant for Financial
Commissioners for the Punjab

Finoncial Commissioner Office, Lahore

The 21st February, 1859

True Copy

Signed R.M. Davies, Secretary to Government of Punjab.

No. 143

DOCUMENT 12

From R.H. Davies, Esquire,
Secretary to Government,
Punjab & its dependencies.

To

The Secretary to the Government of India,
Foreign Department.

Dated Lahore, the 1st March, 1859

Political Department

Sir,

With reference to your letter No. 4568 dated 13th November, 1857, to the address of the late Chief Commissioner, forwarding for report and opinion copy of a despatch from the late Hon'ble Court of Directors, regarding a proposal to translate into English or some other European language, the "Grunth" or the sacred book of the Sikhs, I am now directed to forward copy of a letter from Mr. D.F. Mcleod, Financial Commissioner on the subject.

2. It will be seen, that Mr. Mcleod has succeeded in obtaining a perfectly authentic copy of all the "Grunth" from Gooroo Sadho Singh *Sodee* of Kartarpoor in the Jullundur District, the Chief of the *Sodee Priesthood*, who are the representatives of the Gooroo Govind. Mr. Mcleod further suggests that these books be sent to England for deposit in Her Majesty's Oriental Library and that they be presented to John Lawrence now on his way home. By these means, an opportunity would be afforded to the Oriental scholars of England and the continent to reproduce the Grunth in an European garb.

3. The Honourable the Lieutenant Governor concurs in the foregoing recommendations. He fears with Mr. Mcleod, that there are few, if any in the Punjab, who have the knowledge, inclination and leisure requisite to make a proper translation of these Grunths and that it would be far better done in England.

4. If, however, it be desirable that the translation be made here then no one better could be selected to superintend the work than Mr. Cust, who was the original projector of the scheme, and is now resident at Amritsar the Headquarters of the Sikh religion.

5. Lastly I am to commend to the favourable notice of His Excellency the Governor General in Council the readiness with which the Gooroo Sadho Singh Sodee has met the wishes of Government in furnishing transcripts of the ~~only authentic~~ copies of the Grunth extent, a favour which he is described as having refused even to the Maharajah Ranjit Singh himself. The Honourable the Lieut. Governor trusts that the acknowledgement of Supreme Government will be accorded to the Gooroo.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Yours most obedient servant,

(Sd.) Secretary to Government, Punjab.

Lahore,

The 1st March, 1959.

No. 1802

DOCUMENT NO. 13

From

R. Simson, Esquire

Under Seceretary to the Government of India.

To,

R.M. Davies, Esquire, Secretary to the Government
Punjab and its dependencies.

Fort William, the 8th Aprial, 1959.

Foreign Department

Sir,

In reply to your letter of the 8th ultimo No. 177, I am directed by the Governor General in Council to state that it will be better that the translation of the Granth, or sacred book of the Sikhs should be made in England—with this view a copy of the Correspondence will be sent to the Home Government with references to the despatches of the Honble the Court of Director in the Public Department No 111 of the 12th August 1857.

2. His Lordship in Council requests, that the thanks of the Government be communicated to Gooroo Sadho Singh for the readiness with which he complied with the request made to him for transcripts of the Granth.

I have the honour to be.

(Sd.) R. Simson

Under Secretary to the Government.

8th April, 1859.

DOCUMENT NO. 14

*Political Despatch to Secretary of State**No. 54**Dated 22nd April, 1859*

Fort William

Foreign Department

To,

The Right Honble Lord Stanley, M.P.,
Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

My Lord,

With reference to the despatch from the Court of Directors in the Public department, No. 111, dated 12th August 1857, regarding a proposal for the translation into English of the Grunth, or sacred book of the Sikhs, we have the honour to transmit Copy of a letter from the Secretary to the Punjab Government, dated the 1st March last, together with a copy of our reply to it.

We have the honour to be etc.

(Sd.) (1) Canning

Fort William

(2)

22nd April, 1859

(3)

(4)

Contents.*No. 54—Dated 22nd April, 1859.**No. 179—1st March, 1859.**No. 1802—8th April, 1859.*

DOCUMENT NO. 15

No. 4

*Secretary to Government of Punjab No. 759 of 1859.**From*

R.A. Davies, Esquire,
 Secretary to the Government Punjab
 and its dependencies.

To

Cecil Beadon, Esquire,
 Secretary to the Government of India.

Foreign Department, Calcutta.

*Dated Lahore, the 25th of June, 1859***Pol Department**

Sir,

In reply to your letter No. 1802 of the 8th April I am directed to note for the information of the Right Honourable the Governor General in Council that Mr. E. Prinsep, Deputy Commissioner of Sealkote, has been instructed to receive charge of the Grunth and to convey it to Sir John Lawrence Baronet, G.C.B., for presentation to Her Majesty's ORIENTAL Library, as a gift from Gooroo Sadhoo Singh Sodhee of Kurtarpore and in view to its being translated in England. As the Supreme Government are aware Mr. Prinsep is already in charge of some presents for Her Majesty from the Maharaja of Cashmere and the opportunity seemed a fitting one for sending home the Grunth.

I have the honour to be

(Sd.) R.H. Devies

Secretary to the Government of Punjab
 and its dependencies.

*Lahore**25th June, 1859.*

DOCUMENT NO. 16

*No. 111**16th July, 1859.**To,*

The Right Honble Lord Stanley M.P.

Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

My Lord,

In continuation of our despatch No 54 dated 22nd April last we have the honour to transmit copy of a letter from the Secretary to the Punjab Government, dated 25th June, intimating that Mr. G.A. Prinsep, had been instructed to receive charge of the Grunth and to convey it to Sir John Lawrence for presentation to Her Majesty's Oriental Library as a gift from Gooroo Sadhoo Singh Sodhee of Kurtarpoor, and in view to its being translated in English contents.

We have etc.

(Sd.) (1) Canning

(2) Outram

(3) H.B. Harrington.

DOCUMENT 7

Foreign 1860

Political despatch from Secy. of State,

To Governor General-in-Council, Calcutta.

*No. 34**Dated 24 April, 1860*

My Lord,

I have received the copy of Grunth, despatched to England under the charge of Mr. F. Prinsep from the

enclosures to your despatch No. 54 of 1859. I learn that this Copy was prepared by direction of the Gooroo Sadhu Singh Sodhee and by him presented as a mark of respect to the British Government. It is my wish, that your Lordship should cause a complimentary letter to be written to the Gooroo thanking him in the name of Her Majesty's Government and that you should also present him with a suitable Khillat.

I have received also with your despatch No. 16 of 13th July the Copy of the life of Guru Nanak written in the Gurumukhi language and illustrated with original drawings by native artists. This interesting volume is presented by Bedi Bikrma Singh, one of the chief representatives of the family of Guru Nanak. It is desirable that in this case also, you should make a suitable acknowledgement to the donor on the part of the British Government. The English narrative of the life of Nanak forwarded with this is very creditable to Mr. Cust.

*I have the honour to be
your etc.*

C. Wood.

PL-1229

**INSCRIPTION ON THE BLADE OF THE
SWORD OF GURU GOBIND SINGHJI**
—(*Raekote Sword*)

In Gurmukhi Character

Dehni Taraf (Right Side)

Akal Purakh ki rachchia hamne

Sarab Loh ki Rachchia hamne

*Ek Onkar Satgur Parsad Autar Khas Patshah
10.*

Bain Taraf. (Left Side.)

Sarab Kal ki Rachchia Hamne

Sarab Jia ki Rachchia Hamne

LOODIANA
Deputy Commissioner's Office
10th May, 1854.

(Sd.) H. Brerton
Deputy Commissioner

Sd. R.C. Temple
Secreatry